

## **Achieving new goals with first Lean Government Initiative**



The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) set out to test Lean Six Sigma tools by conducting and evaluating at least one process improvement project in each DNR division. Nine of the first ten projects have now been completed; all of them successfully recommending improvements that met the following five agency-wide goals:

- reduce DNR staff workload;
- reduce lead (delivery) time--Lead time is the time it takes for a customer to receive a product or service;
- improve customer satisfaction;
- simplify the process;
- ensure staff and customer safety.

### **Initiative Highlights:**

- ✓ Project Teams were given five months (March to July) to complete the recommendations for their projects. Teams have now implemented their improvements or are on track to implement them by the end of 2012.
- ✓ Teams will continue to track and report process lead times (the time it takes to deliver their product to the customer) into the future to ensure that the improvements are maintained.
- ✓ Training and mentoring was provided by Waukesha County Technical College at a total cost of \$8383.
- ✓ All project expenses except for the Forestry project were minimal meeting costs. Almost all of the recommended improvements could be accomplished with existing staff time.
- ✓ The projects are having a positive impact. 100% of Team Leaders and 90% of Team Members were very or somewhat confident that their projects would have a lasting and positive impact on the process.

## Individual Project Highlights:

- Clean Boats Clean Waters Project: Customer Service and Water staff eliminated wasteful steps in the grant application process, and reduced the time it takes to get an answer to the grantee from 90 business days to 14 business days.
- LeMay Forestry Center: Forestry staff at the center redesigned their stockroom to make filling orders more efficient, and reduced the steps taken to fill an order from 1,583 feet to 319 feet, a reduction of 79 percent.
- Wild Game Serving Permit Process: Law Enforcement staff along with customers and the Department of Health worked together to reduce the time needed to secure a permit from weeks to hours. Dale Maas, a customer of the recently improved permit process, shared his feedback with DNR staff: "This new process is great! Those of us that have dealt with the old one appreciate the change."
- Legal Opinion Process: Legal Services staff analyzed the process used to issue legal opinions to DNR programs and made improvements that are expected to reduce attorney workload by at least 10% and improve consistency by establishing a track-able legal opinion database.
- Air Construction Permit Process: Air Management staff further refined their air construction permit process, finding additional improvements that are expected to decrease the permit time by another 7% and reduce outlier situations that exceed the permitting timeline goal of 80 days.
- Remediation and Redevelopment Closure Process: Remediation and Redevelopment staff are implementing a new consistent statewide process for site closures. A new "completeness review" step has been added which ensures that technical staff receive more complete applications sooner and allows for customers to be notified of whether or not their application package is complete in 10 days or less.
- Master Planning - Phase 2: DNR staff are implementing improvements to the Phase 2 portion of the Master Planning process that are expected to reduce the completion time by 42%.
- Endangered Resources Reviews: Endangered Resources (ER) staff worked with DNR regulatory programs to identify ways to promote consistency and timeliness with the review of impacts to endangered resources. Improvements

are being implemented that will allow ER staff to comment on projects within 48 hours 95% of the time and to reduce duplicative ER reviews between programs.

- Nutrient Management Plans: Water Staff worked with the Department of Trade, Agriculture, and Consumer Protection, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and customers to improve the usefulness and timeliness of nutrient management plan reviews. Staff are now implementing steps that will help DNR more consistently review plans and shorten the expected approval turn-around time from 240 days to 60 days.

To learn more about the first projects and results, go to DNR's Internet homepage <http://dnr.wi.gov/> and keyword search "Lean Gov" or contact Kristy Rogers at [kristy.rogers@wisconsin.gov](mailto:kristy.rogers@wisconsin.gov) or call her at 608-261-4383.